

Kentucky Department of Education Program Review Guide for Practical Living/Career Studies, Writing, and Arts & Humanities

Section 2: Program Review Process



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NOTES

The Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) wishes to thank those who assisted in the development of these Program Reviews. KDE gives special thanks to:

- The 35 Kentucky educators who originally authored the program reviews;
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SECTION 2: CONDUCTING AND USING A PROGRAM REVIEW

When conducting an initial program review, schools should use a systematic, step-by-step process. It is important to remember that the baseline review process will take time to complete and that subsequent reviews can be completed on a more efficient timeline.

Step 1: Creating Review Committees

Review committees for each program area should be determined, as sub-committees of the SBDM Council, including the following stakeholders:

- teacher representatives who work in the discipline
- teacher representatives from across content areas
- school leaders

The team may also include:

- parent representatives
- student representatives (when possible)
- other relevant community stakeholders
- classified school staff (FRYSC coordinators, custodians, secretaries)
- school media specialists and other certified school staff

The review committee should be convened for an initial informational meeting so they can become familiar with the requirements of the program review and the kind of quality evidence necessary to determine if the demonstrators meet expectations. The committee will also discuss the purpose and process for program review. Schools may choose to set up a committee for each of the program reviews, or they may choose to organize committees around each of the four program standards (i.e. a curriculum and instruction committee that focuses only on that standard in all three programs, a formative and summative assessment committee, a professional development and support services committee, and administrative/leadership support and monitoring committee).

Step 2: Identifying Evidence

Evidence is identified to support the school's analysis. Program review evidence may be specific for an area (Writing, Arts & Humanities, and Practical Living/Career Studies) or may be common across other reviews. Evidence identification tasks should be assigned based on the respective roles and responsibilities of each stakeholder. For example, curriculum and instructional data should be identified by teachers, while parent survey information may be collected and documented by parent representatives. It is important to note here that evidence identification will be a fluid process. Review teams will likely find they need to search out additional evidence during the process in order to make judgments or to support judgments.

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Step3: Convene for Rubric Assessment Process

After reviewing evidence, the Review Committee should convene to complete program review rubrics. A sample Review Committee Meeting agenda is included in the appendix.

During the meeting, use the following process:

- Review and discuss demonstrators and associated characteristics, encouraging each committee member to share their reflections and questions and identify existing evidence in the school programs.
- Have copies of the rubrics available for each committee member, and complete each row of characteristics under demonstrator in the rubric with consensus on the performance level. When consensus is difficult, revisit the evidence and discuss until committee members can agree on the performance level best represented by the evidence.
- After the rubric is complete, compose a rationale that details the evidence that supports and justifies the level of performance determined by the team.

Step 4: Identify next steps.

- Engage the review committee in discussion of the characteristics that are noted as “Needs Improvement.”
- Draw on the ideas and suggestions of the review committee to determine next steps for ongoing program improvement – those actions that will assist the school in moving from “Needs Improvement” to “Proficient.”
- Examine characteristics that are noted as “Proficient.” Draw on the ideas and suggestions of the review committee to determine next steps for ongoing program improvement – those actions that will assist the school in moving from “Proficient” to “Distinguished”
- Complete the Recommendations for Program Improvement section for each demonstrator.

Complete this process for each of the four rubrics for each program area.

Step 5: Share the Internal Program Review Report

After all program review processes are completed, the entire review set should be prepared for distribution and discussion. The review set includes

- Program Review Coversheet (in Appendix)
- Program Review Report and Recommendations (in the *Recommendations for Program Improvement* section by demonstrator on the rubric documents)
- Detailed list of identified evidence artifacts, by demonstrator

Program Review Report sets should be shared and discussed with a variety of stakeholders, through a variety of means.

1. A copy of the full review report should be submitted to the school’s SBDM Council, and made available to district leadership personnel, including the superintendent,

relevant assistant superintendent(s), school board member(s), and any district program and/or curriculum leaders.

2. The Program Review Report and a summary of Recommendations for Program Improvement may be shared with parents, along with a cover letter from the school summarizing and explaining the purpose for and results of the program review (see appendix for sample parent letter)
3. The full review report should be shared and discussed with whole school faculty in a meeting specifically designed for sharing both processes and results. Time should be available for the review set to be examined at length and for questions and discussion. A sample faculty meeting agenda is included in the appendix.
4. The Program Review Report and summary of Recommendations for Program Improvement may be shared with relevant community stakeholders, along with a cover letter from the school summarizing and explaining the purpose for and results of the program review (see appendix for sample community stakeholder letter)
5. For additional sharing opportunities (parent events, conferences etc), schools may provide the Program Review Report and summary of Recommendations for Program Improvement, and a sampling of the evidence used to support the contents of the report.

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Ongoing Internal Program Review

The internal program review process should be completed at least three times per year, with ongoing evidence identification throughout the year. After the initial program review is completed, schools should subsequently follow the process below both mid-year and at the end of the year. Specific focus should be given to the recommendations for improvement identified in previous reviews.

Step 1: Convene Review Committees

Convene area review committee(s) to revisit the existing rubrics, report, and evidence. Complete two processes during this meeting.

- A. Determine the extent to which, and ways in which previous recommendations have been implemented. Discuss the ways in which program recommendations are being implemented, and the formative results of that implementation.
- B. Revisit the evidence to determine whether updates are needed. Identify all new evidence and/or sources of evidence that can continue to inform the review.
- C. If it is determined that new data should be identified, assign evidence identification tasks.

Step 2: Update the Evidence

Assigned committee members update the evidence and submit it for the upcoming rubric status meeting.

Step 3: Revisit the Program Status

Convene the review committee. Provide copies of the previously completed rubrics, and blank rubrics. Use the following process to revisit the program status.

- Review and discuss evidence, encouraging each committee member to share reflections and ask questions.
- Complete each row of the rubric with consensus on the performance levels. When consensus is difficult, revisit the evidence and discuss until committee members can agree on the assessment points best represented by the evidence.
- After the rubric is complete, finalize the report in the *Rationale for Results* section. Write a rationale which includes a detailed list of identified evidence by demonstrator. Evidence must support and justify the resulting score.

Step 4: Identify Next Steps

- Engage the review committee in discussion of the characteristics that are noted as “Needs Improvement.”
- Draw on the ideas and suggestions of the review committee to determine next steps for ongoing program improvement – those actions that will assist the school in moving from “Needs Improvement” to “Proficient.”
- Examine those characteristics that are noted as “Proficient.” Draw on the ideas and suggestions of the review committee to determine next steps for ongoing program improvement – those actions that will assist the school in moving from “Proficient” to “Distinguished.”

- Complete the Recommendations for Program Improvement section of the review report for continued improvement throughout the year.

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Step 5: Report on Program Status

Share the Program Review Report with all stakeholders as discussed above for the first and last internal review each year. Mid-year review should be considered for internal program milestone evaluation, but does not need to be formally shared with external stakeholders.

Because the mid-year review provides critical formative information, it does need to be shared with all faculty members, engaging them in reflection about the identified evidence and in a discussion of next steps for continuous improvement of the three programs.

As program review committees continue their work over time, the process will become more efficient. In addition, as all stakeholders become more aware of the evidence that exists to inform programs and the process for review, evidence should begin to be updated on an ongoing basis, thus making the periodic formal review process even more efficient.

The goals are that this program review becomes an ongoing and familiar process for schools over time and that an updated and current program review will be available on any day for discussion and review.

An Annual District External Review

KRS 158.6453 (7) (a) 3; (c) 6 states that “Each district shall do an annual program review....” District leaders are responsible for conducting an annual external program review. The method a district uses to complete the external review is a local decision. Whether districts choose to use this process described in this document or to design an alternative process, the purpose of the annual district review is to help involve districts in an advisory role supporting the improvement and evaluation of a school’s Writing, Arts & Humanities and Practical Living/Career Studies programs.

This process should be completed after the school’s internal program review at the end of each year. External reviewers may use the following process:

Step 1: Determine and Convene the External Review Team

Districts should organize the external review team early in the year to

- familiarize the team with program reviews and the process they will use when conducting an external review
- establish supporting connections for schools with district and community partners

This initial introduction and engagement of the external review team may help facilitate an easier process for the team when they conduct their annual review at the end of the year.

The external review team may be made up of the following stakeholders:

- Relevant Assistant Superintendent(s) or other representatives of the Superintendent
- District Curriculum and/or Program Resource Specialists
- University or community partners

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- Staff member(s) from a neighboring school (within or outside the district)
- Representative(s) from the educational cooperative serving the district
- Representative(s) from relevant professional organization(s)

Convene the external review team to discuss and prepare for the external review process.
Share and discuss the External Review Site Visit Agenda (included in the appendix).
Distribute the internal program review report prepared by the school.

Step 2: Study the Internal Program Review Report

Individual team members review the entire internal review report set (including the report and recommendations, individual completed rubrics and evidence). Members should look at

- the quality of the evidence the school identified to determine if it justifies the school's self-assigned scores
- the plans for improvement identified by school teams to determine the school's progress toward program improvement

During this time team members should make notes and write questions about the internal review set for further discussion and identify evidence they wish to see during the upcoming visit.

Step 3: Conduct the External Review Site Visit (an all day process)

For this process, a site visit should be scheduled with the school, so personnel will be available for discussion during the visit. In addition, the district team should request a private space in the school for necessary activities during the visit. All team members should convene at the school site for a full day process. This process will provide districts and schools with additional evidence to support program improvement.

The process may include

- a preliminary meeting of the district team to discuss any notations and/or questions that arose during their individual study of the internal review set.
- a meeting with a sub-group of the internal review committee to allow them to formally share and discuss their review process and results.
- some randomly selected classroom visits to directly observe program implementation.
- a sampling of individual teacher interviews about program implementation, quality, and improvement efforts
- a sampling of individual student interviews about program experiences and impact
- a closing meeting with a sub-group of the internal review committee to ask any follow-up questions (important to note that early impressions should not be shared in this meeting, but instead held for a formal reporting process).

Materials are provided in the appendix to support the external review, including a sample site visit agenda, teacher and student interview protocols, and classroom observation tools.

Step 4: Produce the External Review Report

After the site visit is completed, convene the external review committee to complete the external review reporting process described below.

- Discuss the site visit and all findings from the visit.
- Complete the final external report providing additional recommendations for school program improvement.

Step 5: Share the External Review Report

After the external review report is completed, it should be shared with the school through the following process.

- Provide a written External Program Review Report.
- Provide time for follow-up discussion at the school site to respond to any questions or requests for assistance from the internal review committee.

Continuous Program Improvement

The importance of systematic program review cannot be overstated as a process to ensure that all stakeholders are aware of the ongoing quality of program implementation, and committed to continuous improvement of programs over time. Although the formal internal program review process should be completed three times per year, stakeholders and review committees will, over time, become familiar with the rubric content, the review process, and identification of evidence will be more integrated into the daily program practices of the school. In this way, program review will become less of an 'event' and more of an expected and transparent process for ongoing school improvement.

Recognition for growth – schools' progress toward meeting their improvement goals – should happen at the local level. In some cases schools may have met or exceeded their goals. In other cases, especially with long-range improvement plans, schools may be making significant improvement progress, but they may not have reached proficiency by the end of the year. Districts can encourage continued progress by recognizing their growth. This recognition process will also spotlight best practices in programs within the schools in the district.

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